



Notes from LEAD Editor

*The successful 21st century leader is constantly learning and adapting to an increasingly complex, changing, and information-rich environment. Adapting requires a new style of leadership that embraces rather than avoids change, and which recognizes that success results from developing and bringing out the skills of everyone in the organization. This month in **LEAD**, you will find articles discussing how to develop into a 21st century leader.*

THE NEW LEADER

LEAD article

What leadership competencies will organizations require of its leaders through the next decade and beyond? A successful leader in the twenty-first century will need a different mix of leadership skills, competencies, and perspectives. Organizations differ in their needs and structure, but many leadership competencies are necessary in every organization. Below is a list of important core leadership competencies.

Thinking Skills

Decision-making, problem solving, and reasoning.

Dealing with Others

Interpersonal skills, teamwork, communication, and listening.

Personal Qualities

Flexibility, judgment, leadership, HR management, and negotiating.

Administrative Skills

Managing information, planning and evaluating, self-management, and writing.

These core competencies are all important for leaders to be successful in all industries. However, equally important is the idea that leaders help develop these competencies in other leaders and employees. Leaders can profoundly change the organizational cli-

mate and positively affect the capacity for formulating and implementing sound policy by improving upon these competencies with themselves and the people around them.

The leadership goal, then, is a matter of facilitating a shift from the hierarchical, command and control structure to a more encompassing and adaptive way of knowing and changing the environment. Leaders must have a sense of where the culture is going to be, and where the organization must be if it is to mature and grow.

Leading by enhancing and influencing the performance of others, promoting information exchange among organizational members, and providing a sense of purpose and direction can all come from developing these twenty-first century leadership competencies.

-Adapted from the Center for the Study of Work Teams, University of North Texas, workteam@unt.edu

THE 21ST CENTURY QUESTIONING PROCESS

Below are the steps to the twenty-first century questioning process:

- 1 Awareness.** Be sure you know what you need to know – what information you're looking for. Otherwise you'll ask the wrong questions and get the wrong responses.
- 2 Ability.** Identify the person who can give you the answer or at least point you in the right direction.
- 3 Atmosphere.** Refrain from dropping a complicated question on a colleague unexpectedly. Decide when and where to approach the person you need to ask.
- 4 Attitude.** The way you phrase the question can influence the

The way we ask questions determines the information we will receive from others. Understanding and asking the correct questions take time and practice. Anyone can ask questions that produce useful answers and results by teaching themselves to think of asking questions as a process.

answer. For best results, avoid yes/no questions and rely on open-ended queries – who, what, when, where, why, and how.

5 Answer. If you didn't receive the answer you expected, dig deeper to find out why you're surprised. Maybe your assumptions were incorrect to start with.

6 Appreciation. Thank the other person for helping you out.

7 Action. You should ask questions with some idea in mind of your response. What will you do now that you've gotten your answer? How will you put the answer into action?

-Adapted from *Positive Leadership*, (800) 878-5331, www.ragan.com





ARE YOU A 21ST CENTURY LEADER?

Leaders possess different types of personal and work qualities that help them succeed. As times have changed, new qualities have become more important. Today in the twenty-first century, leaders need to possess certain qualities that reflect today's times and organizational structures.

- **Be effective.** You need to be helpful, useful, and efficient in the things you do.
- **Enjoy life.** Staying focused on work is important, but leaders need to know when to lighten the mood or take a break.
- **Use time wisely.** Personal time management and helping others best use their time is key for the success of the organization.
- **Be self-assured.** Believe in yourself and have confidence in what you are doing. But, do not be arrogant about it.
- **See the end result.** Staying focused on the end helps in the completion of projects. Help others around you see what the final end goal is and how you can get there together.
- **See things from others' points of view.** You are not always right and other people have a wealth of useful information. It is important to encourage and accept other people's opinions and thoughts.
- **Recognize and foster the talents of others.** The employees around you are very talented, it is important to encourage their growth and help them develop.
- **Know your industry.** It is important to read industry news and belong to professional organizations. These sources can provide you with a lot of information and a support network.
- **Have the ability to plan.** Planning is important in the accomplishment of goals and objectives. It is helpful to plan your goals step by step in order to stay focused.
- **Act with integrity.** People around you need to be able to trust you. Follow through with what you say you will do and hold others accountable to do the same.
- **Stand for what you believe.** You need to stand by your morals and convictions. Even if others do not agree with you, it is important to stand up for what you believe in. This is not to say that sometimes you need to change your views or opinions. Listen to both sides, be rational, and be willing to change your opinion when appropriate.

-Adapted from "Are You a Leader" by Peter Urs Bender, from Speakers Platform. For speaking and training, please contact: Speakers Platform 805-563-7731 or Speakers@speaking.com

LEADERSHIP FOR A NEW ERA

In today's modern times, the success of an organization is directly related to the quality of its leadership. This is true because all organizations need strong leaders to be successful. You can further develop into a strong leader by continually using the 8 ideas below in your work and business interactions.

- ✳ **Great listening skills.** Strong leaders understand they know only part of the answer. They listen carefully to other people to pick up the rest.
- ✳ **Action orientation.** After listening, gathering information and analyzing, great leaders act. They accomplish this by developing a positive vision and following through.
- ✳ **Honesty.** A leader knows that an organization functions effectively if it knows the truth. A leader tells his team the good news – and the bad. Besides trusting the team with information, this kind of attitude shows respect for employees.
- ✳ **Openness.** Every person in the organization can contribute to results – if they have information. Great leaders know this and are open with information.
- ✳ **Willingness to make the hard calls first.** Great leaders don't postpone the tough calls in favor of the easy ones. When they have to take difficult actions, they do – then move on.
- ✳ **Think big.** Leaders look for ideas that will be contagious and excite people. Also, they set and maintain high expectations for all who work in the organization.
- ✳ **Encourage others to do their best.** Successful leaders believe that people do want to make a significant contribution. Coach, counsel, and develop people to live up to their potential.
- ✳ **Overuse polite phrases.** With a few kind words or a simple "please" and "thank you" you can help improve the levels of communication and cooperation from everyone.

-Adapted from *Communication Briefings* Newsletter, Volume 20, Number 1, www.briefings.com

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